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THE MAGIC HOUSE



# THE MAGIC HOUSE

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

DUNCAN CAMPBELL SCOTT



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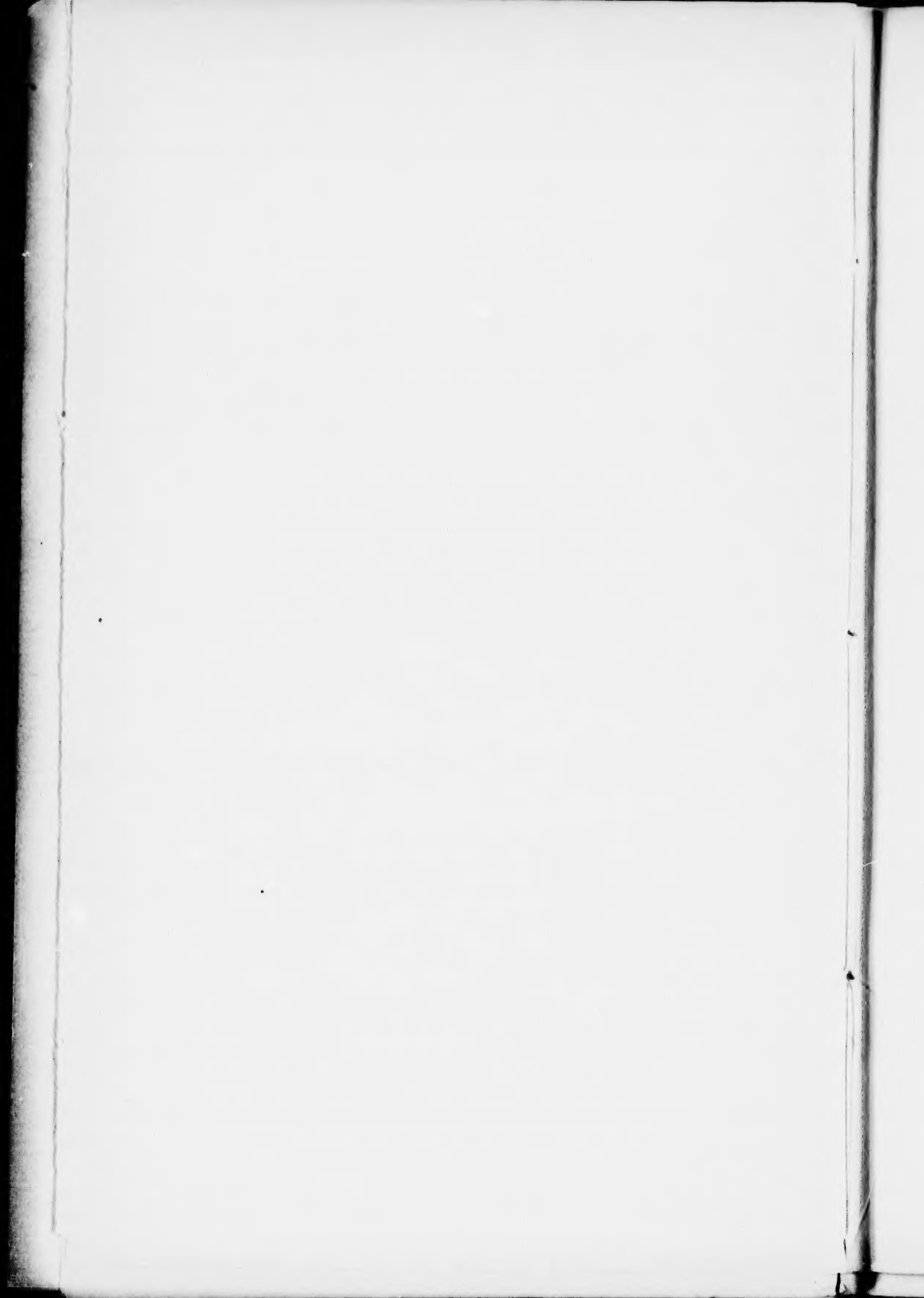
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TO  
MY MOTHER





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## A LITTLE SONG

THE sunset in the rosy west  
Burned soft and high ;  
A shore-lark fell like a stone to his nest  
In the waving rye.

A wind came over the garden beds  
From the dreamy lawn,  
The pansies nodded their purple heads,  
The poppies began to yawn.

One pansy said : It is only sleep,  
Only his gentle breath :  
But a rose lay strewn in a snowy heap,  
For the rose it was only death.

Heigho, we've only one life to live,  
And only one death to die :  
Good-morrow, new world, have you nothing  
to give ?—  
Good-bye, old world, good-bye.

## THE HILL PATH

TO H. D. S.

ARE the little breezes blind,  
They that push me as they pass?  
Do they search the tangled grass  
For some path they want to find?  
Take my fingers, little wind;  
You are all alone, and I  
Am alone too. I will guide,  
You will follow; let us go  
By a pathway that I know,  
Leading down the steep hillside,  
Past the little sharp-lipped pools,  
Shrunk with the summer sun,  
Where the sparrows come to drink;  
And we'll scare the little birds,  
Coming on them unawares;  
And the daisies every one

### THE HILL PATH

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We will startle on the brink  
Of a doze.  
(Gently, gently, little wind),  
Very soon a wood we'll see,  
There my lover waits for me.  
(Go more gently, little wind,  
You should follow soft, behind.)  
You will hear my lover say  
How he loves me night and day,  
But his words you must not tell  
To the other little winds,  
For they all might come to hear,  
And might rustle through the wood,  
And disturb the solitude.  
(Blow more softly, little wind,  
You are tossing all my hair,  
Go more gently, have a care ;  
If you lead you can't be blind,  
So,—good-bye :)  
There he goes : I see his feet  
On the grass ;  
Now the little pools are blurred  
As they pass ;  
And he must be very fleet,

## THE HILL PATH

For I see the bushes stirred  
Near the wood. I hope he'll tell,  
If he isn't out of breath,  
That he met me on the hill.  
But I hope he will not say  
That he kissed me for good-bye  
Just before he flew away.

THE VOICE AND THE DUSK

THE slender moon and one pale star,  
A rose-leaf and a silver bee  
From some god's garden blown afar,  
Go down the gold deep tranquilly.

Within the south there rolls and grows  
A mighty town with tower and spire,  
From a cloud bastion masked with rose  
The lightning flashes diamond fire.

The purple-martin darts about  
The purlieus of the iris fen ;  
The king-bird rushes up and out,  
He screams and whirls and screams again.

A thrush is hidden in a maze  
Of cedar buds and tamarac bloom,  
He throws his rapid flexile phrase,  
A flash of emeralds in the gloom.

A voice is singing from the hill  
A happy love of long ago ;  
Ah ! tender voice, be still, be still,  
‘ ’Tis sometimes better not to know.’

The rapture from the amber height  
Floats tremblingly along the plain,  
Where in the reeds with fairy light  
The lingering fireflies gleam again.

Buried in dingles more remote,  
Or drifted from some ferny rise,  
The swooning of the golden throat  
Drops in the mellow dusk and dies.

A soft wind passes lightly drawn,  
A wave leaps silverly and stirs  
The rustling sedge, and then is gone  
Down the black cavern in the firs.

## FOR REMEMBRANCE

It would be sweet to think when we are old  
Of all the pleasant days that came to pass,  
That here we took the berries from the grass,  
There charmed the bees with pans, and smoke un-  
rolled,  
And spread the melon nets when nights were cold,  
Or pulled the blood-root in the underbrush,  
And marked the ringing of the tawny thrush,  
While all the west was broken burning gold.

And so I bind with rhymes these memories ;  
As girls press pansies in the poet's leaves  
And find them afterwards with sweet surprise ;  
Or treasure petals mingled with perfume,  
Loosing them in the days when April grieves,—  
A subtle summer in the rainy room.

## THE MESSAGE

WIND of the gentle summer night,  
Dwell in the lilac tree,  
Sway the blossoms clustered light,  
Then blow over to me.

Wind, you are sometimes strong and great,  
You frighten the ships at sea,  
Now come floating your delicate freight  
Out of the lilac tree.

Wind, you must waver a gossamer sail  
To ferry a scent so light,  
Will you carry my love a message as frail  
Through the hawk-haunted night ?

For my heart is sometimes strange and wild,  
Bitter and bold and free,  
I scare the beautiful timid child,  
As you frighten the ships at sea ;

THE MESSAGE

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But now when the hawks are piercing the air,  
With the golden stars above,  
The only thing my heart can bear  
Is a lilac message of love.

Gentle wind, will you carry this  
Up to her window white ;  
Give her a gentle tender kiss,  
Bid her good-night—good-night.

## THE SILENCE OF LOVE

My heart would need the earth,  
My voice would need the sea,  
To only tell the one half  
How dear you are to me.

And if I had the winds,  
The stars and the planets as well,  
I might tell the other half,  
Or perhaps I would try to tell.

## AN IMPROMPTU

The stars are in the ebon sky,  
    Burning, gold, alone ;  
The wind roars over the rolling earth,  
    Like water over a stone.

We are like things in a river-bed  
    The stream runs over,  
They see the iris, and arrowhead,  
    Anemone, and clover.

But they cannot touch the shining things,  
    For all their strife,  
For the strong river swirls and swings—  
    And that is much like life.

For life is a plunging and heavy stream,  
    And there's something bright above ;  
But the ills of breathing only seem,  
    When we know the light is love.

The stars are in the ebon sky,  
    Burning, gold, alone ;  
The wind roars over the rolling earth,  
    Like water over a stone.

FROM THE FARM ON THE HILL

TO A. P. S.

THE night wind moves the gloom  
In the shadowy basswood ;  
Mysteriously the leaves sway and sing ;  
So slow, so tender is the wind,  
The slender elm-tree  
Is hardly stirred.

The sky is veiled with clouds,  
With diaphanous tissue ;  
Through their dissolving films  
The stars shine,  
But how infinitely removed ;  
How inaccessible !

In the distant city  
Under the obscure towers  
The lights of watchtowers gleam ;

From the dim fields  
At intervals in the silence  
A cuckoo utters  
A distorted cry ;  
Through the low woods,  
Haunted with vain melancholy,  
A whip-poor-will wanders,  
Forcing his monotonous song.

All the ancient desire  
Of the human spirit  
Has returned upon me in this hour,  
All the wild longing  
That cannot be satisfied.  
Break, O anguish of nature,  
Into some glorious sound !  
Let me touch the next circle of being,  
For I have compassed this life.

AT SCARBORO' BEACH

THE wave is over the foaming reef  
Leaping alive in the sun,  
Seaward the opal sails are blown  
Vanishing one by one.

'Tis leagues around the blue sea curve  
To the sunny coast of Spain,  
And the ships that sail so deftly out  
May never come home again.

A mist is wreathed round Richmond point,  
There's a shadow on the land,  
But the sea is in the splendid sun,  
Plunging so careless and grand.

The sandpipers trip on the glassy beach,  
Ready to mount and fly ;  
Whenever a ripple reaches their feet  
They rise with a timorous cry.

Take care, they pipe, take care, take care,  
For this is the treacherous main,  
And though you may sail so deftly out,  
You may never come home again.

THE FIFTEENTH OF APRIL

TO A. L.

PALLID saffron glows the broken stubble,  
 Brimmed with silver lie the ruts,  
 Purple the ploughed hill ;  
 Down a sluice with break and bubble  
 Hollow falls the rill ;  
 Falls and spreads and searches,  
 Where, beyond the wood,  
 Starts a group of silver birches,  
 Bursting into bud.

Under Venus sings the vesper sparrow,  
 Down a path of rosy gold  
 Floats the slender moon ;  
 Ringing from the rounded barrow  
 Rolls the robin's tune ;

Lighter than the robin ; hark !  
Quivering silver-strong  
From the field a hidden shore-lark  
Shakes his sparkling song.

Now the dewy sounds begin to dwindle,  
Dimmer grow the burnished rills,  
Breezes creep and halt,  
Soon the guardian night shall kindle  
In the violet vault,  
All the twinkling tapers  
Touched with steady gold,  
Burning through the lawny vapours  
Where they float and fold.

## IN AN OLD QUARRY

NOVEMBER

ABOVE the lifeless pools the mist films swim,  
On the lowlands where sedges chaff and nod ;  
The withered fringes of the golden-rod  
Hang frayed and formless at the quarry's rim.  
Filled with the wine of sunset to the brim,  
These limestone pits are cups for the night god,  
Set for his lips when he strays hither, shod  
With shadows, all the stars following him.  
And as gloom grows and deepens like a psalm,  
This broken field which summer has passed by  
Has caught the ultimate lethean calm,  
The fabulous quiet of far Thessaly,  
And though the land has lost the bloom and balm,  
Nature is all content in liberty.

## TO WINTER

COME, O thou conqueror of the flying year ;  
Come from thy fastness of the Arctic suns ;  
Mass on the purple waste and wide frontier  
Thy wanish hosts and silver clarions.

Then heap this sombre shoulder of the world  
With shifting bastions ; let thy storm winds blare ;  
Drift wide thy pallid gonfalon unfurled ;  
And arm with daggers all the desperate air.

These are but raids in dreams, and friendly brawls ;  
Thou art a gentle giant that half sleeps,  
And blusters grandly to his frozen thralls,  
The more to charm them with the wealth he keeps :

We hardly hear thy bluff and hearty word,  
When over the first flower sings the first bird.

## TO WINTER

COME, O thou season of intense repose ;  
Come with thy lidded eyes and crystal breath ;  
Come gently with thy soft release of snows ;  
And bring thy few short months of tender death.

Build a huge tomb within the desert frore,  
With green clear chambers in the icy rift,  
Carve the sleep rune above the crystal door,  
And trench a legend in the pallid drift.

Let the large stars about the horizon lie,  
Watching the confines of the world's great sleep ;  
Spread the vast province of the purple sky,  
With thy wan curtains dropped from deep to deep.

Then hush the stir and bid the movement cease ;  
Pass gently, leave the tired world in peace.

## THE IDEAL

LET your soul grow a thing apart,  
Untroubled by the restless day,  
Sublimed by some unconscious art,  
Controlled by some divine delay.

For life is greater than they think,  
Who fret along its shallow bars :  
Swing out the boom to float or sink  
And front the ocean and the stars.

A SUMMER STORM

LAST night a storm fell on the world  
From heights of drouth and heat,  
The surly clouds for weeks were furled,  
The air could only sway and beat,

The beetles clattered at the blind,  
The hawks fell twanging from the sky,  
The west unrolled a feathery wind,  
And the night fell sullenly.

The storm leaped roaring from its lair,  
Like the shadow of doom,  
The poignard lightning searched the air,  
The thunder ripped the shattered gloom,

The rain came down with a roar like fire,  
Full-voiced and clamorous and deep,  
The weary world had its heart's desire,  
And fell asleep.

## A SUMMER STORM

And now in the morning early,  
The clouds are sailing by  
Clearly, oh ! so clearly,  
The distant mountains lie.

The wind is very mild and slow,  
The clouds obey his will,  
They part and part and onward go,  
Travelling together still.

'Tis very sweet to be alive,  
On a morning that 's so fair,  
For nothing seems to stir or strive,  
In the unconscious air.

A tawny thrush is in the wood,  
Ringing so wild and free ;  
Only one bird has a blither mood,  
The white-throat on the tree.

## LIFE AND DEATH

I THOUGHT of death beside the lonely sea,  
That went beyond the limit of my sight,  
Seeming the image of his mastery,  
The semblance of his huge and gloomy might.

But firm beneath the sea went the great earth,  
With sober bulk and adamantine hold,  
The water but a mantle for her girth,  
That played about her splendour fold on fold.

And life seemed like this dear familiar shore,  
That stretched from the wet sands' last wavy crease,  
Beneath the sea's remote and sombre roar,  
To inland stillness and the wilds of peace.

Death seems triumphant only here and there ;  
Life is the sovereign presence everywhere.

## IN THE COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

## TO THE MEMORY OF MY FATHER

THIS is the acre of unfathomed rest,  
These stones, with weed and lichen bound, enclose  
No active grief, no uncompleted woes,  
But only finished work and harboured quest,  
And balm for ills ;  
And the last gold that smote the ashen west  
Lies garnered here between the harvest hills.

This spot has never known the heat of toil,  
Save when the angel with the mighty spade  
Has turned the sod and built the house of shade ;  
But here old chance is guardian of the soil ;  
Green leaf and grey,  
The barrows blossom with the tangled spoil,  
And God's own weeds are fair in God's own  
way.

Sweet flowers may gather in the ferny wood :  
Hepaticas, the morning stars of spring ;  
The bloodroots with their milder ministering,  
Like planets in the lonelier solitude ;  
And that white throng,  
Which shakes the dingles with a starry brood,  
And tells the robin his forgotten song.

These flowers may rise amid the dewy fern,  
They may not root within this antique wall,  
The dead have chosen for their coronal,  
No buds that flaunt of life and flare and burn ;  
They have agreed,  
To choose a beauty puritan and stern,  
The universal grass, the homely weed.

This is the paradise of common things,  
The scourged and trampled here find peace to grow,  
The frost to furrow and the wind to sow,  
The mighty sun to time their blossomings ;  
And now they keep  
A crown reflowering on the tombs of kings,  
Who earned their triumph and have earned  
their sleep.

Yea, each is here a prince in his own right,  
Who dwelt disguised amid the multitude,  
And when his time was come, in haughty mood,  
Shook off his motley and reclaimed his might ;

His sombre throne  
In the vast province of perpetual night,  
He holds secure, inviolate, alone.

The poor forgets that ever he was poor,  
The priest has lost his science of the truth,  
The maid her beauty, and the youth his youth,  
The statesman has forgot his subtle lure,  
The old his age,  
The sick his suffering, and the leech his cure,  
The poet his perplexed and vacant page.

These swains that tilled the uplands in the sun  
Have all forgot the field's familiar face,  
And lie content within this ancient place,  
Whereto when hands were tired their thought would  
run  
To dream of rest,  
When the last furrow was turned down, and won  
The last harsh harvest from the earth's patient  
breast.

O dwellers in the valley vast and fair,  
I would that calling from your tranquil clime,  
You make a truce for me with cruel time ;  
For I am weary of this eager care  
That never dies ;  
I would be born into your tranquil air,  
Your deserts crowned and sovereign silences.

I would, but that the world is beautiful,  
And I am more in love with the sliding years,  
They have not brought me frantic joy or tears,  
But only moderate state and temperate rule ;  
Not to forget  
This quiet beauty, not to be Time's fool,  
I will be man a little longer yet.

For lo, what beauty crowns the harvest hills !—  
The buckwheat acres gleam like silver shields ;  
The oats hang tarnished in the golden fields ;  
Between the elms the yellow wheat-land fills ;  
The apples drop  
Within the orchard, where the red tree spills,  
The fragrant fruitage over branch and prop.

The cows go lowing through the lovely vale ;  
The clarion peacock warns the world of rain,  
Perched on the barn a gaudy weather-vane ;  
The farm lad holloes from the shifted rail,  
Along the grove  
He beats a measure on his ringing pail,  
And sings the heart-song of his early love.

There is a honey scent along the air ;  
The hermit thrush has tuned his fleeting note,  
Among the silver birches far remote  
His spirit voice appeareth here and there,  
To fail and fade,  
A visionary cadence falling fair,  
That lifts and lingers in the hollow shade.

And now a spirit in the east, unseen,  
Raises the moon above her misty eyes,  
And travels up the veiled and starless skies,  
Viewing the quietude of her demesne ;  
Stainless and slow,  
I watch the lustre of her planet's sheen,  
From burnished gold to liquid silver flow.

And now I leave the dead with you, O night ;  
You wear the semblance of their fathomless state,  
For you we long when the day's fire is great,  
And when stern life is cruellest in his might,  
Of death we dream :  
A country of dim plain and shadowy height,  
Crowned with strangest stars and silences supreme :

Rest here, for day is hot to follow you.  
Rest here until the morning star has come,  
Until is risen aloft dawn's rosy dome,  
Based deep on buried crimson into blue,  
And morn's desire  
Has made the fragile cobweb drenched with dew  
A net of opals veiled with dreamy fire.

## SONG

I HAVE done,  
Put by the lute ;  
Songs and singing soon are over,  
Soon as airy shades that hover  
Up above the purple clover—  
I have done, put by the lute.  
Once I sang as early thrushes  
Sing about the dewy bushes,  
Now I'm mute ;  
I am like a weary linnet,  
For my throat has no song in it,  
I have had my singing minute.  
I have done,  
Put by the lute.

## THE MAGIC HOUSE

IN her chamber, wheresoe'er  
Time shall build the walls of it,  
Melodies shall minister,  
Mellow sounds shall flit  
Through a dusk of musk and myrrh.

Lingering in the spaces vague,  
Like the breath within a flute,  
Winds shall move along the stair;  
When she walketh mute  
Music meet shall greet her there.

Time shall make a truce with Time,  
All the languid dials tell  
Iris'd hours of gossamer,  
Eve perpetual  
Shall the night or light defer.

From her casement she shall see  
Down a valley wild and dim,  
Swart with woods of pine and fir ;  
Shall the sunsets swim  
Red with untold gold to her.

From her terrace she shall see  
Lines of birds like dusky motes  
Falling in the heated glare ;  
How an eagle floats  
In the wan unconscious air.

From her turret she shall see  
Vision of a cloudy place,  
Like a group of opal flowers  
On the verge of space,  
Or a town, or crown of towers.

From her garden she shall hear  
Fall the cones between the pines ;  
She shall seem to hear the sea,  
Or behind the vines  
Some small noise, a voice may be.

But no thing shall habit there,  
There no human foot shall fall,  
No sweet word the silence stir,  
Naught her name shall call,  
Nothing come to comfort her.

But about the middle night,  
When the dusk is loathed most,  
Ancient thoughts and words long said,  
Like an alien host,  
There shall come unsummoned.

With her forehead on her wrist  
She shall lean against the wall  
And see all the dream go by ;  
In the interval  
Time shall turn Eternity.

But the agony shall pass—  
Fainting with unuttered prayer,  
She shall see the world's outlines  
And the weary glare  
And the bare unvaried pines.

## IN THE HOUSE OF DREAMS

## I

THE lady Lillian knelt upon the sward,  
Between the arbour and the almond leaves ;  
Beyond, the barley gathered into sheaves ;  
A blade of gladiolus, like a sword,  
Flamed fierce against the gold ; and down toward  
The limpid west, a pallid poplar wove  
A spell of shadow ; through the meadow drove  
A deep unbroken brook without a ford.

A fountain flung and poised a golden ball ;  
On the soft grass a frosted serpent lay,  
With oval spots of opal over all ;  
Upon the basin's edge within the spray,  
Lulled by some craft of laughter in the fall,  
An ancient crow dreamed hours and hours away.

## II

The lady watched the serpent and the crow  
For days, then came a little naked lad,  
And smote the serpent with a spear he had ;  
Then stooped and caught the coil, and straining slow,  
Took the lithe weight upon his shoulder, so,  
And tugged, but could not move the ponderous  
thing,  
Then flushing red with rage, his spear did fling,  
And cut the gladiolus at one blow.

Then back he swung his flaming weapon high,  
And smote the snake and called a magic name ;  
Then the whole garden vanished utterly,  
And through a mist the lightning went and came,  
And flooded all the caverns of the sky,  
A rosy gulf of unimprisoned flame.

## THE RIVER TOWN

THERE 's a town where shadows run  
In the sparkle and the blue,  
By the river and the sun  
Swept and flooded thro' and thro'.

There the sailor trolls a song,  
There the sea-gull dips her wing,  
There the wind is clear and strong,  
There the waters break and swing.

But at night with leaden sweep  
Come the clouds along the flood,  
Lifting in the vaulted deep  
Pinions of a giant brood.

Charging by the slip, the whole  
River rushes black and sheer,  
There the great fish heave and roll  
In the gloom beyond the pier.

THE RIVER TOWN

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All the lonely hollow town  
Towers above the windy quay,  
And the ancient tide goes down  
With its secret to the sea.

## OFF THE ISLE AUX COUDRES

THE moon, Capella, and the Pleiades  
Silver the river's grey uncertain floor ;  
Only a heron haunts the grassy shore ;  
A fox barks sharply in the cedar trees ;  
Then comes the lift and lull of plangent seas,  
Swaying the light marish grasses more and more  
Until they float, and the slow tide brims o'er,  
And then a rivulet runs along the breeze.

O night ! thou art so beautiful, so strange, so sad ;  
I feel that sense of scope and ancientness,  
Of all the mighty empires thou hast had  
Dreaming of power beneath thy palace dome,  
Of how thou art untouched by their distress,  
Supreme above this dreaming land, my home.

AT LES EBOULEMENTS

TO M. E. S.

THE bay is set with ashy sails,  
With purple shades that fade and flee,  
And curling by in silver wales,  
The tide is straining from the sea.

The grassy points are slowly drowned,  
The water laps and over-rolls,  
The wicker pêche ; with shallow sound  
A light wave labours on the shoals.

The crows are feeding in the foam,  
They rise in crowds tumultuously,  
'Come home,' they cry, 'come home, come  
home,  
And leave the marshes to the sea.'

## ABOVE ST. IRÉNÉE

I RESTED on the breezy height,  
In cooler shade and clearer air,  
Beneath a maple tree ;  
Below, the mighty river took  
Its sparkling shade and sheeny light  
Down to the sombre sea,  
And clustered by the leaping brook,  
The roofs of white St. Irénée.

The sapphire hills on either hand  
Broke down upon the silver tide,  
The river ran in streams,  
In streams of mingled azure-grey,  
With here a broken purple band,  
And whorls of drab, and beams  
Of shattered silver light astray,  
Where far away the south shore gleams.

I walked a mile along the height  
Between the flowers upon the road,  
Asters and golden-rod ;  
And in the gardens pinks and stocks,  
And gaudy poppies shaking light,  
And daisies blooming near the sod,  
And lowly pansies set in flocks,  
With purple monkshood overawed.

And there I saw a little child  
Between the tossing golden-rod,  
Coming along to me ;  
She was a tender little thing,  
So fragile-sweet, so Mary-mild,  
I thought her name Marie ;  
No other name methought could cling  
To any one so fair as she.

And when we came at last to meet,  
I spoke a simple word to her,  
'Where are you going, Marie ?'  
She answered and she did not smile,

But oh ! her voice,—her voice so sweet,  
‘Down to St. Irénée,’  
And so passed on to walk her mile,  
And left the lonely road to me.

And as the night came on apace,  
With stars above the darkened hills,  
I heard perpetually,  
Chiming along the falling hours,  
On the deep dusk that mellow phrase,  
‘Down to St. Irénée :’  
It seemed as if the stars and flowers  
Should all go there with me.

WRITTEN IN A COPY OF ARCHIBALD  
LAMPMAN'S POEMS

WHEN April moved in maiden guise  
Hiding her sweet inviolate eyes,  
You saw about the hazel roots,  
Beyond the ruddy osier shoots,  
The violets rise.

At even, in the lower woods,  
Amid the cedarn solitudes,  
You heard afar amid the hush  
The argent utterance of the thrush  
In slower interludes.

When bees above in arboured rooms  
Were busy in the basswood blooms,  
You drowsed within the sombre drone,  
Dreaming, and deemed yourself alone,  
Harboured in glooms.

The singing of the sentient bees  
Brought wisdom for perplexities ;  
They taught you all the murmured lore  
Of seas around an ancient shore,  
Of streams and trees.

You saw the web of life unrolled,  
Fold and inweave, weave and unfold,  
Crimson and azure strand on strand,  
From some great gulf in vision-land,  
Deep and untold.

And as the soft clouds opal-gray  
Against the confines of the day  
Seem lighter for the depth of skies,  
So, lighter for your saddened eyes,  
Your fair thoughts stray.

I pluck a bunch before the spring,  
Of field-flowers reflowering,  
Upon a fell that fancy weaves,  
A memory lingers in their leaves  
Of songs you sing.

You must have rested here sometime,  
When thought was high and words in chime,  
Your seed thoughts left for sun and showers  
Have blossomed into pleasant flowers,  
    Instead of rhyme.

And so I bring them back to you,  
These pensile buds of tender hue,  
Of crimson, pink and purple sheen,  
Of yellow deep, and delicate green,  
    Of white and blue.

## OFF RIVIÈRE DU LOUP

O SHIP incoming from the sea  
With all your cloudy tower of sail,  
Dashing the water to the lee,  
And leaning grandly to the gale ;

The sunset pageant in the west  
Has filled your canvas curves with rose,  
And jewelled every toppling crest  
That crashes into silver snows !

You know the joy of coming home,  
After long leagues to France or Spain ;  
You feel the clear Canadian foam  
And the gulf water heave again.

Between these sombre purple hills  
That cool the sunset's molten bars,  
You will go on as the wind wills,  
Beneath the river's roof of stars.

You will toss onward toward the lights  
That spangle over the lonely pier,  
By hamlets glimmering on the heights,  
By level islands black and clear.

You will go on beyond the tide,  
Through brimming plains of olive sedge,  
Through paler shallows light and wide,  
The rapids piled along the ledge.

At evening off some reedy bay  
You will swing slowly on your chain,  
And catch the scent of dewy hay,  
Soft blowing from the pleasant plain.

## AT THE CEDARS

TO W. W. C.

You had two girls—Baptiste—  
One is Virginie—  
Hold hard—Baptiste !  
Listen to me.

The whole drive was jammed  
In that bend at the Cedars,  
The rapids were dammed  
With the logs tight rammed  
And crammed ; you might know  
The Devil had climbed them below.

We worked three days—not a budge,  
'She's as tight as a wedge, on the ledge,'  
Says our foreman ;  
'Mon Dieu ! boys, look here,  
We must get this thing clear.'

He cursed at the men  
And we went for it then ;  
With our cant-dogs arow,  
We just gave he-yo-ho ;  
When she gave a big shove  
From above.

The gang yelled and tore  
For the shore,  
The logs gave a grind  
Like a wolf's jaws behind,  
And as quick as a flash,  
With a shove and a crash,  
They were down in a mash,  
But I and ten more,  
All but Isaac Dufour,  
Were ashore.

He leaped on a log in the front of the  
rush,  
And shot out from the bind  
While the jam roared behind ;  
As he floated along  
He balanced his pole

And tossed us a song.  
But just as we cheered,  
Up darted a log from the bottom,  
Leaped thirty feet square and fair,  
And came down on his own.

He went up like a block  
With the shock,  
And when he was there  
In the air,  
Kissed his hand  
To the land ;  
When he dropped  
My heart stopped,  
For the first logs had caught him  
And crushed him ;  
When he rose in his place  
There was blood on his face.

There were some girls, Baptiste,  
Picking berries on the hillside,  
Where the river curls, Baptiste,  
You know—on the still side

One was down by the water,  
She saw Isaac  
Fall back.

She did not scream, Baptiste,  
She launched her canoe ;  
It did seem, Baptiste,  
That she wanted to die too,  
For before you could think  
The birch cracked like a shell  
In that rush of hell,  
And I saw them both sink—

Baptiste !—  
He had two girls,  
One is Virginie,  
What God calls the other  
Is not known to me.

## THE END OF THE DAY

I HEAR the bells at eventide  
Peal slowly one by one,  
Near and far off they break and glide,  
Across the stream float faintly beautiful  
The antiphonal bells of Hull ;  
The day is done, done, done,  
The day is done.

The dew has gathered in the flowers,  
Like tears from some unconscious deep :  
The swallows whirl around the towers,  
The light runs out beyond the long cloud bars,  
And leaves the single stars ;  
'Tis time for sleep, sleep, sleep,  
'Tis time for sleep.

The hermit thrush begins again,—

Timorous eremite—

That song of risen tears and pain,

As if the one he loved was far away :

‘Alas! another day—’

‘And now Good Night, Good Night,’

‘Good Night.’

## THE REED-PLAYER

TO B. C.

By a dim shore where water darkening  
Took the last light of spring,  
I went beyond the tumult, hearkening  
For some diviner thing.

Where the bats flew from the black elms like leaves,  
Over the ebon pool  
Brooded the bittern's cry, as one that grieves  
Lands ancient, bountiful.

I saw the fireflies shine below the wood,  
Above the shallows dank,  
As Uriel from some great altitude,  
The planets rank on rank.

And now unseen along the shrouded mead  
One went under the hill ;  
He blew a cadence on his mellow reed,  
That trembled and was still.

It seemed as if a line of amber fire  
Had shot the gathered dusk,  
As if had blown a wind from ancient Tyre  
Laden with myrrh and musk.

He gave his luring note amid the fern ;  
Its enigmatic fall  
Haunted the hollow dusk with golden turn  
And argent interval.

I could not know the message that he bore,  
The springs of life from me  
Hidden ; his incommunicable lore  
As much a mystery.

And as I followed far the magic player  
He passed the maple wood,  
And when I passed the stars had risen there,  
And there was solitude.

## A FLOCK OF SHEEP

TO C. G. D. R.

OVER the field the bright air clings and tingles,  
In the gold sunset while the red wind swoops ;  
Upon the nibbled knolls and from the dingles,  
The sheep are gathering in frightened groups.

From the wide field the laggards bleat and follow,  
A drover hurls his cry and hooting laugh ;  
And one young swain, too glad to whoop or hollo,  
Is singing wildly as he whirls his staff.

Now crowding into little groups and eddies  
They swirl about and charge and try to pass ;  
The sheep-dog yelps and heads them off and steadies  
And rounds and moulds them in a seething mass.

They stand a moment with their heads uplifted  
Till the wise dog barks loudly on the flank,  
They all at once roll over and are drifted  
Down the small hill toward the river bank.

Covered with rusty marks and purple blotches  
Around the fallen bars they flow and leap ;  
The wary dog stands by and keenly watches  
As if he knew the name of every sheep.

Now down the road the nimble sound decreases,  
The drovers cry, the dog delays and whines,  
And now with twinkling feet and glimmering fleeces  
They round and vanish past the dusky pines.

The drove is gone, the ruddy wind grows colder,  
The singing youth puts up the heavy bars,  
Beyond the pines he sees the crimson smoulder,  
And catches in his eyes the early stars.

## A PORTRAIT

ALL her hair is softly set,  
Like a misty coronet,  
Massing darkly on her brow,  
Like the pines above the snow ;  
And her eyebrows lightly drawn,  
Slender clouds above the dawn,  
Or like ferns above her eyes,  
Ferns and pools in Paradise.

Her sweet mouth is like a flower,  
Like a poppy full of power,  
Shaken light and crimson stain,  
Pressed together by the rain,  
Glowing liquid in the sun,  
When the rain is done.

When she moves, her motionings  
Seem to shadow hidden wings ;  
So the cuckoo going to light  
Takes a little further flight,  
Fluttering onward, poised there,  
Half in grass and half in air.

When she speaks, her girlish voice  
Makes a very pleasant noise,  
Like a brook that hums along  
Under leaves an undersong :  
When she sings, her voice is clear,  
Like the waters swerving sheer,  
In the sunlight magical,  
Down a ringing fall.

Here her spirit came to dwell  
From the passionate Israfil ;  
One of those great songs of his  
Rounded to a soul like this ;  
And when she seems so strange at even,  
He must be singing in the heaven ;

When she wears that charmed smile,  
Listening, listening all the while,  
She is stirred with kindred things,  
Starry fire and sweeping wings,  
And the seraph's sobbing strings.

## AT THE LATTICE

GOOD-NIGHT, Marie, I kiss thine eyes,  
A tender touch on either lid ;  
They cover, as a cloud, the skies  
Where like a star your soul lies hid.

My love is like a fire that flows,  
This touch will leave a tiny scar,  
I'll claim you by it for my rose,  
My rose, my own, where'er you are.

And when you bind your hair, and when  
You lie within your silken nest,  
This kiss will visit you again,  
You will not rest, my love, you will not rest.

## THE FIRST SNOW

## I

THE field pools gathered into frosted lace ;  
An icy glitter lined the iron ruts,  
And bound the circle of the musk-rat huts ;  
A junco flashed about a sunny space  
Where rose stems made a golden amber grace ;  
Between the dusky alders' woven ranks,  
A stream thought yet about his summer banks,  
And made an August music in the place.

Along the horizon's faded shrunken lines,  
Veiling the gloomy borders of the night,  
Hung the great snow clouds washed with  
pallid gold ;  
And stealing from his covert in the pines,  
The wind, encouraged to a stinging flight,  
Dropped in the hollow conquered by the cold.

## II

Then a light cloud rose up for hardihood,  
Trailing a veil of snow that whirled and broke,  
Blown softly like a shroud of steam or smoke,  
Sallied across a knoll where maples stood,  
Charged over broken country for a rood,  
Then seeing the night withdrew his force and  
fled,  
Leaving the ground with snow-flakes thinly  
spread,  
And traces of the skirmish in the wood.

The stars sprang out and flashed serenely near,  
The solid frost came down with might and  
main,  
It set the rivers under bolt and bar;  
Bang! went the starting eaves beneath the  
strain,  
And e'er Orion saw the morning-star  
The winter was the master of the year.

## IN NOVEMBER

TO J. A. R.

THE ruddy sunset lies  
Banked along the west ;  
In flocks with sweep and rise  
The birds are going to rest.

The air clings and cools,  
And the reeds look cold,  
Standing above the pools,  
Like rods of beaten gold.

The flaunting golden-rod  
Has lost her worldly mood,  
She's given herself to God,  
And taken a nun's hood.

The wild and wanton horde,  
That kept the summer revel,  
Have taken the serge and cord,  
And given the slip to the Devil.

IN NOVEMBER

67

The winter's loose somewhere,  
Gathering snow for a fight;  
From the feel of the air  
I think it will freeze to-night.

## THE SLEEPER

TOUCHED with some divine repose,  
Isabelle has fallen asleep,  
Like the perfume from the rose  
In and out her breathings creep.

Dewy are her rosy palms,  
In her cheek the flushes flit,  
And a dream her spirit calms  
With the pleasant thought of it.

All the rounded heavens show  
Like the concave of a pearl,  
Stars amid the opal glow  
Little fronds of flame unfurl.

Then upfloats a planet strange,  
Not the moon that mortals know,  
With a magic mountain range,  
Cones and craters white as snow ;

Something different yet the same—  
Rain by rainbows glorified,  
Roses lit with lambent flame—  
'Tis the maid moon's other side.

When the sleeper floats from sleep,  
She will smile the vision o'er,  
See the veined valleys deep,  
No one ever saw before.

Yet the moon is not betrayed,  
(Ah ! the subtle Isabelle !)  
She's a maiden, and a maid  
Maiden secrets will not tell.

## A NIGHT IN JUNE

THE world is heated seven times,  
The sky is close above the lawn,  
An oven when the coals are drawn.

There is no stir of air at all,  
Only at times an inward breeze  
Turns back a pale leaf in the trees.

Here the syringa's rich perfume  
Covers the tulip's red retreat,  
A burning pool of scent and heat.

The pallid lightning wavers dim  
Between the trees, then deep and dense  
The darkness settles more intense.

A hawk lies panting in the grass,  
Or plunges upward through the air,  
The lightning shows him whirling there.

A bird calls madly from the eaves,  
Then stops, the silence all at once  
Disturbed, falls dead again and stuns.

A redder lightning flits about,  
But in the north a storm is rolled  
That splits the gloom with vivid gold ;

Dead silence, then a little sound,  
The distance chokes the thunder down,  
It shudders faintly in the town.

A fountain plashing in the dark  
Keeps up a mimic dropping strain ;  
Ah ! God, if it were really rain !

## MEMORY

I SEE a schooner in the bay  
Cutting the current into foam ;  
One day she flies and then one day  
Comes like a swallow veering home.

I hear a water miles away  
Go sobbing down the wooded glen ;  
One day it lulls and then one day  
Comes sobbing on the wind again.

Remembrance goes but will not stay ;  
That cry of unpermitted pain  
One day departs and then one day  
Comes sobbing to my heart again.

## YOUTH AND TIME

Move not so lightly, Time, away,  
Grant us a breathing-space of tender ruth ;  
Deal not so harshly with the flying day,  
Leave us the charm of spring, the touch of youth.

Leave us the lilacs wet with dew,  
Leave us the balsams odorous with rain,  
Leave us of frail hepaticas a few,  
Let the red osier sprout for us again.

Leave us the hazel thickets set  
Along the hills, leave us a month that yields  
The fragile bloodroot and the violet,  
Leave us the sorrage shimmering on the fields.

You offer us largess of power,  
You offer fame, we ask not these in sooth,  
These comfort age upon his failing hour,  
But oh, the charm of spring, the touch of youth !

## A MEMORY OF THE 'INFERNO'

AN hour before the dawn I dreamed of you ;  
Your spirit made a smile upon your face,  
As fleeting as the visionary grace  
That music lends to words ; and when it flew,  
I thought of how the maid Francesca grew,  
So lovely at Ravenna, until Time  
Ripened the fruit of her immortal crime.  
As pure as light my vision took this hue  
To paint our sorrow : so your lips made moan ;  
' Upon that day we read no more therein ' :  
I wept, such tears Paolo might have known ;  
And all the love, the immemorial pain,  
Swept down upon me as I felt begin,  
That furious circle rage and reel again.

## LA BELLE FERONIERE

I NEVER trod where Leonardo was,  
Then why art thou within this house of dreams,  
Strange Lady ? From thy face a memory streams,  
Of things, forgotten now, that came to pass ;  
The flower of Milan floated in thy glass :  
Thy dreaming smile ; thy subtle loveliness !  
Ah ! laughter airier far than ours, I guess,  
Lighted thy brow, fleeter than fire in grass.

Yet, there is something fateful in thy face :  
Say, when the master caught it, didst thou know,  
Almost thy name would perish with thy grace,  
Thine artifices melt away like snow,  
And all the power within this painted space,  
Be his alone to hold and haunt us so ?

## A NOVEMBER DAY

THERE are no clouds above the world,  
But just a round of limpid grey,  
Barred here with nacreous lines unfurled,  
That seem to crown the autumnal day,  
With rings of silver chased and pearled.

The moistened leaves along the ground,  
Lie heavy in an aureate floor ;  
The air is lingering in a swoond ;  
Afar from some enchanted shore,  
Silence has blown instead of sound.

The trees all flushed with tender pink  
Are floating in the liquid air,  
Each twig appears a shadowy link,  
To keep the branches moored there,  
Lest all might drift or sway and sink.

This world might be a valley low,  
In some lost ocean grey and old,  
Where sea-plants film the silver flow,  
Where waters swing above the gold  
Of galleons sunken long ago.

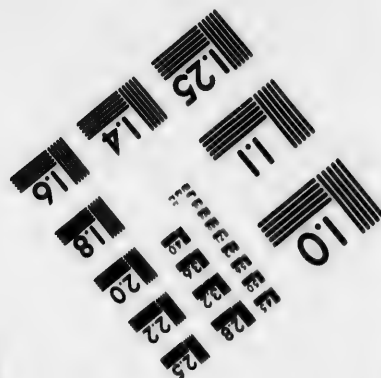
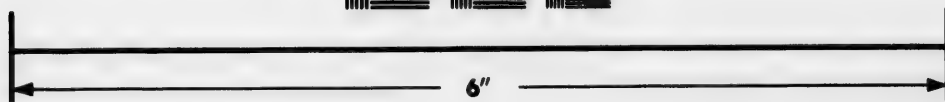
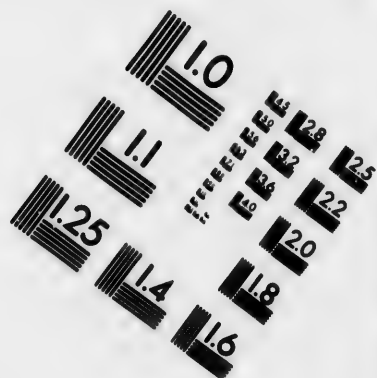
## OTTAWA

CITY about whose brow the north winds blow,  
Girdled with woods and shod with river foam,  
Called by a name as old as Troy or Rome,  
Be great as they, but pure as thine own snow ;  
Rather flash up amid the auroral glow,  
The Lamia city of the northern star,  
Than be so hard with craft or wild with war,  
Peopled with deeds remembered for their woe.

Thou art too bright for guile, too young for tears,  
And thou wilt live to be too strong for Time ;  
For he may mock thee with his furrowed frowns,  
But thou wilt grow in calm throughout the years,  
Cinctured with peace and crowned with power  
sublime,  
The maiden queen of all the towered towns.

## SONG

HERE 's the last rose,  
And the end of June,  
With the tulips gone  
And the lilacs strewn ;  
A light wind blows  
From the golden west,  
The bird is charmed  
To her secret nest :  
Here 's the last rose—  
In the violet sky  
A great star shines,  
The gnats are drawn  
To the purple pines ;  
On the magic lawn  
A shadow flows  
From the summer moon :  
Here 's the last rose,  
And the end of the tune.



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## NIGHT AND THE PINES

HERE in the pine shade is the nest of night,  
Lined deep with shadows, odorous and dim,  
And here he stays his sweeping flight,  
Here where the strongest wind is lulled for him,  
He lingers brooding until dawn,  
While all the trembling stars move on and on.

Under the cliff there drops a lonely fall,  
Deep and half heard its thunder lifts and booms ;  
Afar the loons with eerie call  
Haunt all the bays, and breaking through the  
glooms  
Upfloats that cry of light despair,  
As if a demon laughed upon the air.

A raven croaks from out his ebon sleep,  
When a brown cone falls near him through the  
dark ;  
And when the radiant meteors sweep  
Afar within the larches wakes the lark ;

The wind moves on the cedar hill,  
Tossing the weird cry of the whip-poor-will.

Sometimes a titan wind, slumbrous and hushed,  
Takes the dark grove within his swinging power ;  
And like a cradle softly pushed,  
The shade sways slowly for a lulling hour ;  
While through the cavern sweeps a cry,  
A Sibyl with her secret prophecy.

When morning lifts its fragile silver dome,  
And the first eagle takes the lonely air,  
Up from his dense and sombre home  
The night sweeps out, a tireless wayfarer,  
Leaving within the shadows deep,  
The haunting mood and magic of his sleep.

And so we cannot come within this grove,  
But all the quiet dusk remembrance brings  
Of ancient sorrow and of hapless love,  
Fate, and the dream of power, and piercing things  
Traces of mystery and might,  
The passion-sadness of the soul of night.

## A NIGHT IN MARCH

At eve the fiery sun went forth  
    Flooding the clouds with ruby blood,  
Up roared a war-wind from the north  
    And crashed at midnight through the wood.

The demons danced about the trees,  
    The snow slipped singing over the wold,  
And ever when the wind would cease  
    A lynx cried out within the cold.

A spirit walked the ringing rooms,  
    Passing the locked and secret door,  
Heavy with divers ancient dooms,  
    With dreams dead laden to the core.

‘ Spirit, thou art too deep with woe,  
    I have no harbour place for thee,  
Leave me to lesser griefs, and go,  
    Go with the great wind to the sea.’

I faltered like a frightened child,  
That fears its nurse's fairy brood,  
And as I spoke, I heard the wild  
Wind plunging through the shattered wood.

'Hast thou betrayed the rest of kings,  
With tragic fears and spectres wan,  
My dreams are lit with purer things,  
With humbler ghosts, begone, begone.'

The noisy dark was deaf and blind,  
Still the strange spirit strayed or stood,  
And I could only hear the wind  
Go roaring through the riven wood.

'Art thou the fate for some wild heart,  
That scorned his cavern's curve and bars,  
That leaped the bounds of time and art,  
And lost thee lingering near the stars?'

It was so still I heard my thought,  
Even the wind was very still,  
The desolate deeper silence brought  
The lynx-moan from the lonely hill.

' Art thou the thing I might have been,  
If all the dead had known control,  
Risen through the ages' trembling sheen,  
A mirage of my desert soul ? '

The wind rushed down the roof in wrath,  
Then shrieked and held its breath and stood,  
Like one who finds beside his path,  
A dead girl in the marish wood.

' Or have I ceased, as those who die  
And leave the broken word unsaid,  
Art thou the spirit ministry  
That hovers round the newly dead ? '

The auroras rose in solitude,  
And wanly paled within the room,  
The window showed an ebon rood,  
Upon the blanched and ashen gloom.

I heard a voice within the dark,  
That answered not my idle word,  
I could not choose but pause and hark,  
It was so magically stirred.

It grew within the quiet hour,  
With the rose shadows on the wall,  
It had a touch of ancient power,  
A wild and elemental fall ;

Its rapture had a dreaming close :  
The dawn grew slowly on the wold,  
Spreading in fragile veils of rose,  
In tender lines of lemon-gold.

The world was turning into light,  
Was sweeping into life and peace,  
And folded in the fading night,  
I felt the dawning sink and cease.

## SEPTEMBER

THE morns are grey with haze and faintly cold,  
The early sunsets arc the west with red ;  
The stars are misty silver overhead,  
Above the dawn Orion lies outrolled.  
Now all the slopes are slowly growing gold,  
And in the dales a deeper silence dwells ;  
The crickets mourn with funeral flutes and bells,  
For days before the summer had grown old.

Now the night-gloom with hurrying wings is stirred,  
Strangely the comrade pipings rise and sink,  
The birds are following in the pathless dark  
The footsteps of the pilgrim summer. Hark !  
Was that the redstart or the bobolink ?  
That lonely cry the summer-hearted bird ?

## BY THE WILLOW SPRING

TO E. W.

COME hither, Care, and look on this fair place,  
But leave your gossip and your puckered face  
Beyond that flowering carrot in the glow,  
Where the red poppies in the orchard blow,  
And come with gentle feet ; the last thing there  
Was a white butterfly upon the air,  
And even now a thrush was in the grass,  
To feel the sovereign water slowly pass.  
This pool is quiet as oblivion,  
Hidden securely from the flooding sun ;  
Its crystal placid surface here receives  
The wan grey under light of the willow leaves ;  
And shy things brood about the grass unheard ;  
Only in sunny distance sings the bird.  
O Time long dead, O days reclaimed and done,  
Thou broughtest joy and tears to every one,  
And here by this deep pool thou wast not slow,  
To deal a maiden all her tender woe ;

Be kindlier to her now that she is dead,  
Let her charmed spirit visit this well-head  
More often, for at eve in honey-time,  
Drifting in silence from her ghostly clime,  
She haunts the pool about the willows pale :  
Be gentle, for my feeling art may fail,  
I'll freshen sorrow and retell her tale.

She was a fragile daughter of the earth,  
And touched with faery from her fatal birth ;  
For many summers she was hardly shy,  
Not clouded with her hovering destiny,  
But only wild as any woodland thing,  
That comes at even to a trodden spring ;  
And scarce she seemed of any settled mood,  
That lights the peaceful hills of maidenhood,  
But shifted strangely on the whimsy air,  
Not quiet nor contented anywhere.  
She gathered sunshine in an earthen cruse,  
And thought to keep it for her own sweet use ;  
Or fluttered flowers from her window high,  
And wept upon them when they would not fly ;  
And when she found the brownish mignonette  
Had blossomed where a little seed was set,

She planted her rag playmate in the sun,  
Because she wanted yet another one ;  
And when she heard the enraptured sparrow sing,  
She clamoured for a song from everything.  
For many years she was as strange and free,  
As a pine linnet in a cedar tree.  
Her folk thought : She is very wild and odd,  
But she is good, we'll wait and trust in God.  
O love, that watched the weird and charmed child,  
Change from her airy fancies sweet and mild,  
Like a blue brook that clears a meadow spring,  
And threads the barley where the bobolinks sing,  
Then wimples by the roots of dusky firs,  
And gathers darkness in those deeps of hers,  
Then makes an arrowy movement through a pass,  
Where rocks are crannied with the clinging grass,  
Then falls, almost dissolved in silver rain,  
She gathers deeply to a pool again ;  
But something wild in her new spirit lies,  
She never can regain her limpid eyes :  
O love, alas ! 'twas ever so to be,  
When streams set out to reach the bitter sea.  
It was a time within the early spring,  
Before the orchards had done blossoming,

Before the kinglet on his northern search,  
Had ceased his timorous piping in the birch,  
When streams were bright before the coming leaves  
And gurgled like the swallows in the eaves,  
She wandered led by fancy to this place,  
And looked upon the water's crystal face ;  
She saw—what thing of beauty or of awe  
I know not, no one knoweth what she saw.  
But ever after she was constant here,  
As silent as her shadow in the mere,  
Sitting upon a stone which many feet  
Had grooved and trodden for the water sweet,  
And leaning gravely on her slanted arm,  
Her fingers buried in the gravel warm,  
She gazed and gazed and did not speak or sigh,  
As if this gazing was her destiny.  
They led her nightly from the magic pool,  
Before the shadows grew too deep and cool ;  
They thought to win her from the liquid spell,  
And tried to tease the elfin maid to tell,  
What was the charm that led her to the spring ;  
But all their words availed not anything.  
Then gazed they on the surface of the pool  
To read the reason of such subtle rule ;

Their eyes were overclouded, they could see  
(Who had drawn water there perpetually)  
Nothing but water in a depth serene,  
With a few moony stones of palish green.  
They thought perchance it was her face she saw  
And answered, beauty unto beauty's law,  
But when they showed her image in a glass,  
She was not cured and nothing came to pass ;  
So then they left her to her own strange will,  
And here she stayed when the fair pool was  
still.

But when the wind would hurl the heavy rain,  
She peered out sadly from her window-pane ;  
And when the night set wildly close and deep,  
She took her trouble down the dale of sleep :  
But when the night was warm and no dew fell,  
She waked and dreamed beside the starlit well.

Then came a change, each day some offering  
She laid beside the clear soft flowing spring ;  
And there she found them at the break of morn,  
And everything would take away forlorn ;  
Until beside the unconscious spring was laid  
Each treasure held most precious by a maid.

After, she offered flowers and often set  
A bowlful of the pleasant mignonette,  
And starred the stones with the narcissus white,  
And pansies left athinking all the night,  
Then ruffled dewy dahlias, and at last,  
When sundown told the summer-time had passed,  
The stained asters ; but from day to day,  
Sadly she took the untouched flowers away.  
With autumn and the sounding harvest flute,  
She brought her timid god the heavy fruit ;  
But found it still and cool at early dawn,  
Beaded with dew upon the crispy lawn.  
At last one eve she placed an apple here,  
Smooth as a topaz and as golden clear,  
Scented like almonds, with a flesh like dew  
And luscious-sweet as honey through and through.  
She left it sadly on the sleepy lawn,  
But when she came again her apple gold was gone.

Day after day for days she mutely strove,  
Not to be separate from her placid love ;  
Perchance she thought that, breaking through the  
spell,  
Her shadow-god, deep in the tranquil well,

Had taken her last gift ;—no man may know ;  
Her fancies merged with all mute things that go  
The poppied path, dreams and desires foredone,  
The unplucked roses of oblivion.

But now she searched for words that would  
express

Something of all her spirit's loneliness ;  
And formed a liquid jargon, full of falls  
As weird and wild as ariel madrigals ;  
Our human tongue was far too harsh for this,  
Or her slight spirit bore too great a bliss ;  
But always grew she very faint and pale,  
Day after day her beauty grew more frail,  
More mute, more eerie, more ethereal ;  
Her soul burned whitely in its waning shell.

Then came the winter with his frosty breath  
And made the world an image of white death,  
And like to death he found the charmed child ;  
Yet could not kill her with his bluster wild.  
Only in his first days she went about,  
And sadly hearkened to his hearty shout ;  
From windows where the wizard frost had traced  
Moth-wings of rime with silver ferns inlaced,

She saw her pool set coldly in the drift,  
Where in the autumn she had left her gift,  
Capped with a cloud of silver steam or smoke,  
That hovered there whether she dreamed or  
woke ;

And often stealing from her early sleep,  
She watched the light cloud in the midnight deep,  
Waver and blow beneath the moon's white globe,  
Shivering and whispering in her chilly robe.  
At last she would not look or speak at all,  
And turned her large eyes to the shaded wall.  
Now she is dead, they thought ; but never so,  
She died not when the winter winds did blow ;  
She was a spirit of the summer air,  
She would not vanish at the year's despair.

At length the merry sun grew warm and high,  
And changed the wildwood with his alchemy ;  
The violet reared her bell of drooping gold,  
And over her the robin chimed and trolled.  
When the first slender moon of May had come,  
That finds the blithe bird busy at his home,  
They missed the spirit maiden from the room,  
That now was sweet with light and spring perfume,

And called her all the echoing afternoon ;  
She answered not, but when the growing moon  
Went down the west with the last bird awing,  
They found her dead beside her darling spring.

This is her tale, her murmurous monument  
Flows softly where her fragile life was spent,  
Not grooved in brass nor trenched in pallid stone,  
But told by water to the reeds alone.

She cometh here sometimes on summer eves,  
Her quiet spirit lingers in the leaves,  
And while this spring flows on, and while the wands  
Sway in the moonlight, while in drifting bands,  
The thistledown blows gleaming in the air,  
And dappled thrushes haunt the precinct fair ;  
She will return, she will return and lean  
Above the crystal in the covert green,  
And dream of beauty on the shadow flung  
Of irised distance when the world was young.

Let us be gone ; this is no place for tears,  
Let us go slowly with the guardian years ;  
Let us be brave, the day is almost done,  
Another setting of the pleasant sun.

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